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THE DEATH OF BISHOP BROOKS.

"All the world grieves." The death of Bishop Brooks on the 23d of January fell upon Boston and the country like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. Nobody was expecting it. He had been sick only a week, with no serious indications till the last day. He was but fifty-seven years old and in the very strength of his powers. He himself was looking forward to many years of active service in the cause which he loved so much. But death came "like a thief in the night," and it was all cut short. It was nearly impossible to realize that the great life had gone. He had made himself so much a part of Boston, of New England, of the best religious life of the world, and people had so come to look upon him as a wise and noble leader, that it seemed impossible to think of him as gone. "Is he really dead?" men said to one another. Even the newsboys lowered their voices as they uttered his name the next morning. Children in the schools wept when the news of his death came. Christian ministers broke down and sobbed like children.

It is easily within bounds to say that the death of no man in our land would have produced more sincere and widespread regret than his has done. He was one of the really great men of this generation, not only as a Christian and a preacher but as a man and a citizen. He lived on the highest plane of life and thought and action, and had the rare gift of inspiring with his own high ideals nearly all with whom he came in contact. His intellectual endowments were large, his sympathies broad and deep, his devotion to Christ and to the redemption and uplifting of man to all appearances perfect, his readiness to dispense himself for the good of others without bounds.

His Christian life and work belong to the whole church of God. He was nominally a bishop and preacher of the Episcopal church, but really a bishop of the church universal. He loved and was fair towards Christians of every name. The walls of denominationalism could not resist the strength and comfort of his teaching nor the charm of his Christian personality, and men of all creeds were drawn to him and loved him. If all Christians had his spirit, denominationalism would either disappear or lose all its tendencies to mar and weaken the unity of the body of Christ.

It is difficult to analyze a life like his and say in what its greatness consisted. It was its completeness, rather than the prominence of any particular part. He was a full-orbed Christian man. "He thought as a man, he

understood as a man, he spoke as a man." With the strength of his intellect, the boundlessness of his sympathies and the generosity of his self-sacrifice were mingled a simple frankness, a gentle courtesy and an unpretending modesty which attracted and won all hearts. His fame was made as a preacher, and it is as such that he will be remembered. He was fast winning distinction as a bishop, but anything that he might have gained in this field could have added little to what he was already held to be. He was one of the greatest expounders of Christianity that this age has produced. But his teaching was in one respect unique. It dealt little in dogma. Its chief characteristic was its spiritual concreteness. He always had to do with life, with its reality, its sources, its freshness, its power, its completeness, its beauty. The poetic power of his imagination was strong, his insight deep and clear, but intuitive rather than discursive. This sometimes made his sermons seem in parts mystic and involved, but it was the mysticism and intricacy of nature as you see it face to face, where it is often more easily understood than described.

He did not neglect dogma, but it lay in his sermons like science in nature, hidden away beneath the freshness and fulness of concrete life. His preaching was therefore always practical, even in those parts where his thoughts were difficult to follow. It touched the conscience, it moved the will, it inspired and lifted men up. He seemed to be standing face to face with Christ, describing him, his character, his perfectness, his loveliness, rather than telling whence he came and whither he went. He made one feel how blessed a thing it is to live, to be with Christ, to drink in His fulness, to be like Him. The bony structure of dogmatic theology gave place in him to the living form with its activity and its beauty. This was the central secret of his power over souls for good. He inspired hopefulness, love of the good, admiration for the spiritually beautiful. He drew men away from selfishness and baseness by fanning into a flame within them the love of Christ and His goodness and moral beauty. The suspicion of unsoundness in his doctrinal views probably grew out of this characteristic of his thought and teaching. It is difficult to state a truth from its concrete side and make it look the same as when stated from the abstract point of view.

Phillips Brooks was in the highest sense of the term, a peace-maker. His life and work drew men together and made them feel their brotherhood. He treated all in a brotherly way, and felt it a privilege to spend his life and strength in helping them. Though from absorption in his religious work he never gave special attention to the peace movement, his sympathies were with all efforts to do away with the barbarities of war and to bring in the reign of peace. He had been one of the vice-presidents of the American Peace Society since 1888.